

City Council Minutes

July 22, 2002

The Council of the City of Milton-Freewater met in regular session on Monday, July 22, 2002 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers of City Hall.

The following members were present: Mayor Lewis Key, Councilors Saager, Lyon, Kelley, Woods and Humbert. Staff members present were City Manager Delphine Palmer, Assistant City Manager Linda Hall, Finance Director Dave Richmond, Police Chief Mike Gallaher, Public Works Superintendent Howard Moss and City Planner Gina Hartzheim.

Citizens present were John Short, Ellen DeGross, Don Wiggins, Steve Irving, Mary Clark and Merle Sherman.

Representing the press was Jeff Durham of the Blue Mountain Pioneer.

Steve Irving presented a Certificate to Mayor Lewis Key and City Manager Delphine Palmer from the Organ Donor Program for the cities involvement in the program and setting aside a day by proclamation to recognize the Organ Donor Program.

Consent Calendar Items:

Councilor Kelley moved to adopt the consent calendar containing the June 24, 2002 and July 8, 2002 minutes and adopting Resolution No. 1895 authorizing signature to the engineering agreement with Anderson Perry for design of improvements of Highway 339. Councilor Saager seconded and the motion was passed unanimously. Mayor Key announced to the audience that this was the opportunity for citizens to approach the council with concerns not on the agenda.

Jean Ephlin, 1216 N. Elizabeth, stated the speeding problem on Elizabeth street needed to be stopped, that he had spoken to our Chief of Police as well as the City Manager and he didn't think enough was being done to curtail the issue. Mr. Ephlin also stated he didn't believe that our local Black and White units were the answer. When asked what Mr. Ephlin wanted done, he stated he wanted an unmarked police car used in the area. City Manager Delphine Palmer asked the Police Chief Mike Gallaher to address the issue. Chief Gallaher stated he would have to have patrols sporadically throughout the week as schedules permit. Chief Gallaher further stated the issued had been raised and that the issue would be actively addressed.

Steve Irving, 826 Jacquelyn, stated that a discussion in the Planning Commission suggested that the three-way stop at DeHaven and SW 2nd Avenue should be changed to a four-way stop due to out-of-town guests coming to both the junior high and the park.

PUBLIC HEARING and RESOLUTION NO. 1896 Supplemental Budget to authorize appropriations for the fiscal year 2003; to amend the adopted budget for the acceptance of a Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Grant for new computers and software for the library.

Mayor Lewis Key opened and summarized the rules for public hearing.

No Ex Parte contact was declared.

Mayor Lewis Key asked if notice of hearing had been published according to law. Assistant City Manager Linda Hall stated that this had been done. Mayor Key asked if there had been any written comments. Ms. Hall replied that there were none. Mayor Key asked for citizen comments and questions. There were none. Finance Director Dave Richmond stated the \$19,100.00 is over 10% of the Library funds budget of \$176,000.00 requiring by Oregon law a supplemental budget. The check is from the Gates Foundation specifically for computer purchases. Our library director thought the foundation would deliver computers, but instead sent a check. Mr. Richmond recommended the adoption of the supplemental budget to use the funds appropriately. Mayor Key asked if this money counted towards the funding of the library. Mr. Richmond explained that this was not a part of the library funding, that it was totally separate and specifically directed towards computer expenditures. Councilor Humbert asked if there were any stipulations other than computers. Mr. Richmond explained that computers and computer software were the specific stipulations. Councilor Woods asked if there was a special discount on computers and software. Mr. Richmond stated we had to purchase Gateway computers, but were more flexible with software.

Mayor Lewis Key declared the hearing to be closed.

Councilor Humbert moved to adopt Resolution No. 1896. Councilor Woods seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING and RESOLUTION NO. 1897 Weed and Debris Abatement.

Mayor Lewis Key opened and summarized the rules for public hearing.

No Ex Parte contact was declared.

Mayor Lewis Key asked if notice of hearing had been published according to law.

Assistant City Manager Linda Hall stated that this had been done. Mayor Key asked if there had been any written comments. Ms. Hall replied that there were none.

Mayor Lewis Key invited citizens to contribute to the hearing. None spoke.

Public Works Superintendent Howard Moss stated this was the second of three events in weed abatement, the first being the large mailing in the spring. This second mailing includes those previously notified and are still in violation along with new violations. Property owners have all been notified by certified mail and if council supports the hearing, these listed properties shall be cleaned up. Councilor Woods asked if the city would actually clean up the properties. Mr. Moss stated that the procedure would be to go out Friday afternoon and inspect the listed properties and then clean up those properties that have not complied and then send billings with rates set by resolution. Councilor Humbert asked if property owners received notification of rates at the time of the letter. Mr. Moss said that notification of rates are not required by ordinance.

Mayor Lewis Key declared the hearing closed.

Councilor Kelley motioned to adopt Resolution No. 1897. Councilor Lyon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDERATION of Police Department Vehicle Take Home Policy. Police Chief Mike Gallaher stated several reasons the Take-Home Policy would be beneficial to the police department, saying that response time would be decreased due to the elimination of checking out patrol vehicles first at the police department. Chief Gallaher further stated that the police department had researched this for the last

three years and found that in other departments, costs have been reduced. Councilor Saager stated that he heard many complaints about city patrol cars parked outside the city limits and he felt these complaints were valid. Chief Gallaher said that one of the stipulations in the Take-Home Policy was that the vehicles had to be parked within the service area. Councilor Saager also said he had seen state and county vehicles at homes and that they were maintained (washed and vacuumed) by the designee. Councilor Saager asked if maintenance would be a part of the Take-Home Policy. Chief Gallaher said that indeed cleaning the vehicle would be part of the policy. Councilor Saager then said the City should save money on cleaning vehicles. Chief Gallaher said he would have to report back on that issue as there was a program in place with the City to clean the vehicles. Councilor Saager stated the program with the City should be deleted if maintenance can be done at home with assigned vehicles. Chief Gallaher said he would take this under advisement. Councilor Saager asked about stopping at the grocery store on the way home, if that would be approved. Chief Gallaher said that at this time personal errands would not be approved. City Manager Delphine Palmer stated that in other cities, vehicles could be used for personal use, but that she agreed our vehicles should not be used for any personal use. Ms. Palmer further stated that there were questions about insurance, but after researching the City's insurance she found that the insurance policy would not be affected at all. Councilor Humbert stated that the consideration would only be for two vehicles as officers are already taking home vehicles. Chief Gallaher said that was correct but added a third vehicle could be considered as well. Councilor Lyon asked about non-sworn personnel as passengers and the reason why there would be this kind of passenger. Chief Gallaher stated there was a policy already in place where citizens can apply to ride along with our officers, but that if any citizen or non-sworn personnel happened to be in a police vehicle when called to an incident that may have risk involved, that citizen would not be allowed to attend. City Manager Delphine Palmer encouraged councilors and citizens to sign up for our ride-along program, that the program was very educational. John Short, 84613 Hwy 11, reported to council a couple incidents regarding police vehicles at home, stating his thoughts that police cars at home are not necessary nor beneficial.

Councilor Humbert moved to table this discussion until the next meeting. Councilor Woods questioned the concerns and Councilor Humbert continued stating he wanted to discuss some items with City Manager Delphine Palmer and perhaps add a disciplinary portion if policy is not met. Councilor Saager stated this policy needed to be approved by council in a timely manner, but that he needed more information and as an example cited the cleaning maintenance of assigned vehicles. Councilor Saager seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

CONSIDERATION of Request to Initiate Vacation Proceedings for a Parcel Located at 5th and Russell by Paul Seaquist. City Planner Gina Hartzheim stated the only issue before the Council at this time is whether to initiate the vacation proceedings on the Council's own motion. A public hearing would then be scheduled on the request of staff and citizens. Historically, council has allowed the vacation proceedings to develop by their own motion, which would relieve the applicant of a very cumbersome process requiring notarized consents before applicant could proceed

with the scheduling of a public hearing. At the time of scheduling the hearing a deposit would be required from applicant to cover actual publication costs.

Councilor Humbert stated that if a sidewalk were to be poured at four feet wide, this would run into a power pole and that this was his only problem with this proposal. Ms. Hartzheim stated this issue could be discussed during the hearing process, but that this particular area is not on the City's sidewalk master plan. City Manager stated that Paul Seaquist had discussed with her how to, or if to move the pole. When this issue actually goes to hearing, we will invite Electric Superintendent Mike Charlo to address the power pole issue.

Paul Seaquist, 1028 Jacquelyn Street, showed pictures and diagrams which depicted the area visually for council and citizens. Mr. Seaquist addressed the power pole issue stating his plans under his cost was to place a new pole on the north side.

Councilor Kelley made a motion to direct staff to a public hearing on vacating a five-foot strip along Russell Street north of NE 5th. Councilor Lyon seconded the motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 1898 Amending Employee Pay Plan by Reclassification of on Emergency Communications Specialist to Lead Emergency Communication Specialist. Police Chief Mike Gallaher said the police department has a supervisor for the Emergency Communication Specialists and part of her duties as a supervisor includes, but is not limited to, telecommunications, Reporting requirements and Uniform Crime Reporting. Jean Walker currently holds this position, but she also is working eight hours daily as a dispatcher. Occasionally, she likes to go out of town for a couple of days and has left myself or Sergeant Richman in charge. The Emergency Communication Specialist is a specified field and Sergeant Richman and myself do not qualify. We feel it a need to have a lead person when the supervisor is gone. This person would be paid at a 5% increase of their current wage scale. This would not only aid in our 24-hour/7-day supervision, but would also establish supervising personnel. Mayor Key asked how this would affect the budget and Chief Gallaher said he did not anticipate any supplemental budgets. Assistant City Manager Linda Hall stated that the 5% increase was not unreasonable and is standard of other bargaining unit contracts. Ms. Hall further stated there was a lot of responsibility that went along with the position and that the 5% increase of their current wage scale was not unreasonable. Councilor Kelley said she understood that whoever is designated for a time will receive this pay scale. Chief Gallaher stated that his intention was to have one person with this position.

Councilor Saager moved to adopt Resolution No. 1898 amending the employee pay plan by reclassification of one Emergency Communication Specialist to Lead Emergency Communication Specialist. Councilor Kelley seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

BID AWARD Police Car and compact Pick-up. Public Works Superintendent Howard Moss stated the police car will allow the Police Department to eliminate the last State-leased car and the compact pickup will be used for the Parks Department, where the pickup currently in service will be used to replace an older pickup that has exceeded its service life. Mr. Moss further stated the police car would replace one leased vehicle which did not work well with police regiment and did not work well with the City's motor pool. Councilor Humbert asked what would be done with the

pickup the City would be replacing. Mr. Moss said the pickup would be put up for a sealed bid or auction. Councilor Humbert asked if the pickup could be used as a spare. Mr. Moss said no, that spares still have to be managed. Councilor Humbert asked if we would receive some monies for the old pickup and Mr. Moss said yes, maybe a \$1,000.00. Councilor Saager asked how much extra money it cost the City to purchase the rear-wheel drive patrol car and Mr. Moss said he would estimate that cost at \$2,000.00 to \$3,000.00. Councilor Saager asked if someone had researched the cost of training police personnel to drive front-wheel drive vehicles versus the increased cost of purchasing rear-wheel drive vehicles. Police Chief Mike Gallaher said that Sergeant Darrin Richman had done this, but Chief Gallaher was not prepared at this time to address the question. Councilor Woods asked if the cost of the Crown Victoria was the total cost for a police car. Mr. Moss said that the car was a police interceptor and that it was made in the factory to be a patrol vehicle, but that we would have to remove shot-gun racks and light bars from retired vehicles and paint the City's graphics on the vehicle. Councilor Humbert asked if these two vehicles were already in the budget and not new budget issues. Mr. Moss stated that indeed they were already in the budget.

Councilor Kelley moved to award the bid for the Police Car to Ford of Walla Walla in the amount of \$22,573.00 and for the compact pickup to Sallee Chevrolet in the amount of \$13,903.67. Councilor Humbert seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 1899 Authorizing signature to contract with the shared Economic Development Specialist. City Manager Delphine Palmer reviewed the budget for an Economic Developer within the Urban Renewal Agency. Community Development Partnership (CDP) has budgeted \$15,000.00 for this contract, the City \$10,000.00, the County \$5,000.00 and the Court District \$5,000.00. Ms. Palmer stated she developed this contract to protect not only the City, but also CDP as well. This contract is specific to the needs and desires of the City and there are checkpoints required within the contract as well as a quarterly payment of \$2,500.00 which will give the City some leverage to receive exactly what they desire and request as per contract. Ms. Palmer stated the City didn't really need to have a contract, but felt that we should. Mayor Key, Councilor Saager and Councilor Kelley all expressed their appreciation for the contract and a job well done.

Councilor Saager moved to adopt Resolution No. 1899 Authorizing signature to contract the shared Economic Development Specialist. Councilor Kelley seconded the motion and was passed unanimously.

MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Delphine Palmer reported that Voice-mail was down at the City and if anyone tried to call they may not get through. Assistant City Manager Linda Hall said that late in the afternoon, Finance Director Dave Richmond had found parts for the telephone system and got our Voice-mail back up and running.

E-mail, however, is not working!

Ms. Palmer reported about our Founder's Day and said that even though it was extremely warm, the event was very successful. Ms. Palmer took the opportunity to thank Howard Moss, George Gillette, Tony Anfinson and Dick Stewart. Many of the people that attended said it was more like a reunion.

Ms. Palmer said that awhile back, Councilor Debra Richards said that Rural Development Initiatives had a program that determined the buildings important to the public, the Community Center, whether to rebuild or remodel school buildings, and through this program priorities were set. However, this program is not free as earlier been thought, and a grant was not found to aid in the cost of \$18,000.00. Ms. Palmer told Rural Development Initiatives that the City was not interested.

Ms. Palmer reported she was working presently on Department Head performance evaluations, which she wants to do annually. Ms. Palmer stated she would be passing those out tomorrow.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Saager thanked City Manager Delphine Palmer for the Founder's Day program stating he thought it was excellent and it showed that a great deal of work was spent on this project and the hard work was appreciated by all of the old-time golfers.

Jeff Durham announced that in addition to Councilor Saager's comments, Ms. Palmer would be the Pioneer Star of the week in tomorrow's issue of The Pioneer due to her role in the Founder's Day event.

Councilor Humbert thanked City Manager Delphine Palmer after calling her at a late hour reporting dry spots in the field. Ms. Palmer aided in the Little League, 9-10 year old, Softball Tournament by getting our Public Works employees out to fix the problem. Councilor Humbert added that the event was ongoing through July 25th for those who would like to attend. City Manager Palmer added that all of the hotels and RV parks were full and the Chamber of Commerce had to search for places in Walla Walla, so determined the event was very successful. Councilor Kelley recognized the large banner announcing the event as well.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Lewis S. Key, Mayor